

Message Text

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AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
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E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJECT: BDI PRESIDENT FASOLT RESIGNS

1. THE BUNDESVERBAND DER DEUTSCHEN INDUSTRIE (FEDERAL ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN INDUSTRY - EQUIVALENT TO NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS IN U.S.) ANNOUNCED ON AUGUST 18 THAT DR NIKOLAUS FASOLT HAS RESIGNED HIS POSITION AS PRESIDENT OF THE BDI EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY. DR FASOLT WAS CHOSEN FOR THE OFFICE LAST JANUARY. HE REPLACED HANNS MARTIN SCHLEYER, WHO HAD BEEN MURDERED BY GERMAN TERRORISTS OF THE ROTE ARMEE FAKTION IN OCTOBER, 1977.

2. THE OFFICIAL REASON GIVEN WAS DR FASOLT'S DESIRE TO DEVOTE HIS FULL ENERGIES TO THE DIRECTION OF HIS FIRM IN BONN - WESSEL-WERK GMBH. HOWEVER, FASOLT HAD
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BEEN EXPERIENCING CRITICISM RECENTLY BECAUSE OF HIS CONVICTION IN JUNE BY A BONN COURT FOR TAX EVASION, FOR WHICH HE WAS FINED OVER 58,000 DM. THE CHARGE AGAINST FASOLT AND OTHER INDUSTRIALIST WAS THAT THEY HAD BEEN PASSING MONEY TO THE CDU THROUGH A RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN LIECHTENSTEIN, AND THEN ILLEGALLY DEDUCTING THESE SUMS FROM THEIR INCOME TAXES AS BUSINESS EXPENSES.

(FASOLT IS APPEALING THE COURT'S VERDICT ON OCTOBER 27 IN BONN.) LOCAL OBSERVERS FEEL THAT FASOLT'S SUDDEN DEPARTURE MAY HAVE BEEN PROMPTED BY THE REALIZATION THAT HIS PERSONAL PROBLEMS WOULD NOT ALLOW HIM TO PROVIDE THE FIRM LEADERSHIP NEEDED IN THE BDI OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS BECAUSE OF UPCOMING WAGE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. THE VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE BDI HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT ROLF RODENSTOCK, ALSO A VICE-PRESIDENT IN THE ORGANIZATION, BE CHOSEN TO REPLACE FASOLT FOR THE REMAINDER OF HIS TERM OF OFFICE, WHICH EXPIRES DEC 31, 1980. THE 61-YEAR OLD RODENSTOCK COMES TO THE BDI PRESIDENCY WITH A LONG HISTORY OF SUCCESS BEHIND HIM. SINCE 1953, HE HAS MANAGED THE OPTISCHE WERKE G. RODENSTOCK IN MUNICH AND MADE IT ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL FIRMS IN THE EYEGLASS AND FRAMES FIELD IN GERMANY. HE HAS GIVEN COURSES ON INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION AND RATIONALIZATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MUNICH SINCE 1956, AND HAS LONG BEEN ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

49 RODENSTOCK, A CSU MEMBER, HAD BEEN OFFERED THE BDI PRESIDENCY AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OF HANNS MARTIN SCHLEYER, BUT DECLINED IN ORDER TO DEVOTE HIMSELF TO TRAINING HIS SON IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FAMILY FIRM, THUS OPENING THE WAY FOR DR FASOLT'S ELECTION. WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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HIS EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN INDUSTRY, POLITICS, AND ACADEME, ROLF RODENSTOCK IS EXPECTED TO PROVIDE THE BDI WITH ENERGETIC, EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP. MEEHAN

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